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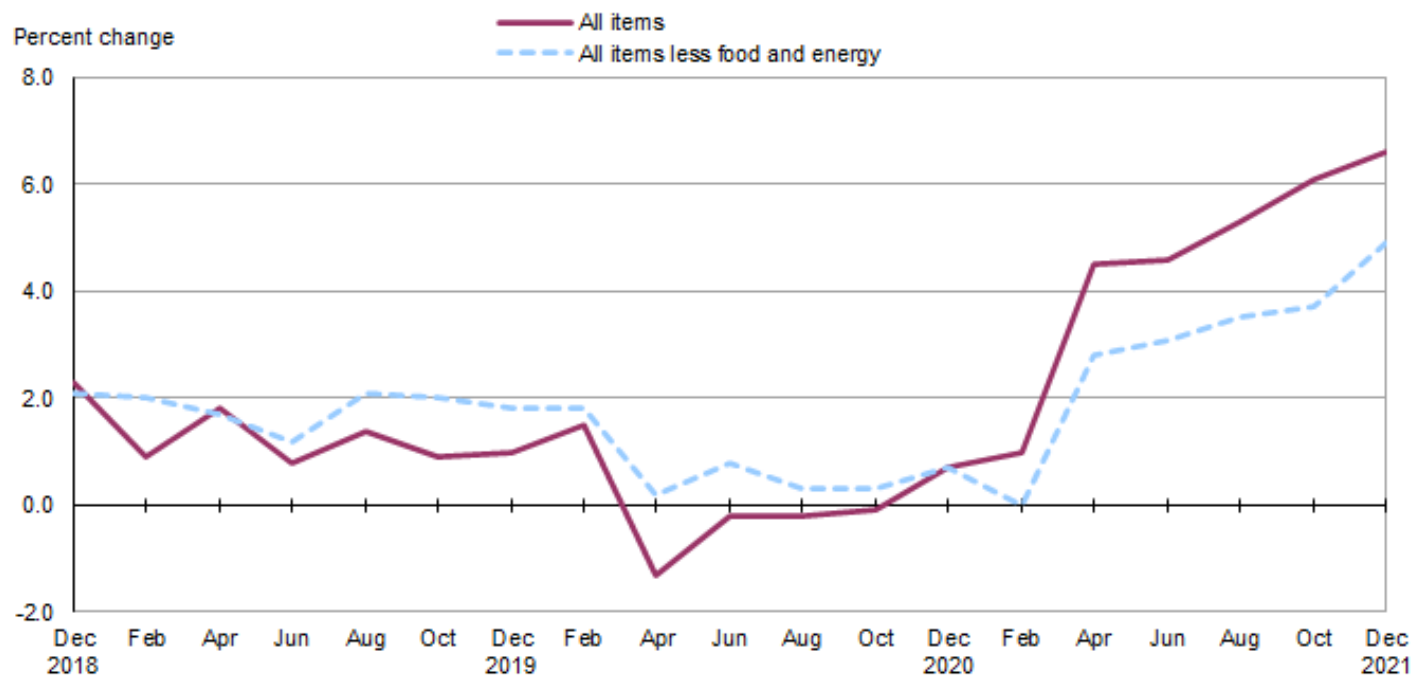
Consumer Price Index, Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land – December 2021

Area prices rise 0.7 percent in November and December, up 6.6 percent over the year

Prices in the Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land area, as measured by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), increased 0.7 percent for the two months ending in December 2021, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Michael Hirniak noted that the December increase was influenced by higher prices for all items less food and energy, but an advance in the food index also contributed. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, bi-monthly changes may reflect seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U advanced 6.6 percent, the largest rise since October 1990. (See [chart 1.](#)) The index for all items less food and energy increased 4.9 percent over the year. Energy prices jumped 30.5 percent, while food prices increased 5.2 percent. (See [table 1.](#))

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land, TX, December 2018–December 2021



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

Food prices rose 0.7 percent for the two months ending in December. Prices for food away from home (restaurant, cafeteria, and vending purchases) advanced 1.7 percent. Prices for food at home (groceries) decreased 0.3 percent for the same period.

During the 12 months ending in December 2021, food prices increased 5.2 percent. Prices for food at home advanced 6.3 percent during the period, partly driven by a rise in meats, poultry, fish, and eggs. Prices for food away from home increased 4.2 percent since a year ago.

Energy

The energy index decreased 1.8 percent for the two months ending in December. The decrease was almost entirely due to lower prices for electricity (-4.2 percent). Prices for gasoline decreased 0.4 percent, while prices for natural gas service were unchanged for the same period.

From December 2020 to December 2021, energy prices surged 30.5 percent, largely due to higher prices for gasoline (+58.9 percent). Prices paid for electricity advanced 7.9 percent, and prices for natural gas service jumped 16.4 percent during the past year.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy advanced 1.0 percent in November and December, after rising 0.5 percent in September and October. Higher prices for shelter (+0.9 percent), used cars and trucks (+6.0 percent) and household furnishings and operations (+2.3 percent) were the largest contributors to the rise.

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy increased 4.9 percent, the largest rise since August 1994. Higher prices for used cars and trucks (+36.3 percent) and new vehicles (+12.4 percent) together drove the advance, while household furnishings and operations (+12.3 percent) and shelter (+1.9 percent) also made notable contributions to the index increase.

The February 2022 Consumer Price Index for the Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land area is scheduled to be released on Thursday, March 10, 2022.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Impact on December 2021 Consumer Price Index Data

Data collection by personal visit for the Consumer Price Index (CPI) program has been suspended almost entirely since March 16, 2020. When possible, data normally collected by personal visit were collected either online or by phone. Additionally, data collection in December was affected by the temporary closing or limited operations of certain types of establishments. These factors resulted in an increase in the number of prices considered temporarily unavailable and imputed.

While the CPI program attempted to collect as much data as possible, many indexes are based on smaller amounts of collected prices than usual, and a small number of indexes that are normally published were not published this month.

For each month from March 2020 to December 2021, BLS has published a summary of the impact of the pandemic on the Consumer Price Index news release and data. The impact summary for December is available at www.bls.gov/covid19/consumer-price-index-covid19-impacts-december-2021.htm.

Beginning with publication of January 2022 data in February 2022, this month-specific impact summary will be discontinued. However, information related to the impact of the pandemic will continue to be available at www.bls.gov/covid19/effects-of-covid-19-pandemic-on-consumer-price-index.htm.

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of the average change in prices over time in a fixed market basket of goods and services. The Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes CPIs for two population groups: (1) a CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) which covers approximately 93 percent of the total U.S. population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers approximately 29 percent of the total U.S. population. The CPI-U includes, in addition to wage earners and clerical workers, groups such as professional, managerial, and technical workers, the self-employed, short-term workers, the unemployed, and retirees and others not in the labor force.

The CPI is based on prices of food, clothing, shelter, and fuels, transportation fares, charges for doctors' and dentists' services, drugs, and the other goods and services that people buy for day-to-day living. Each month, prices are collected in 75 urban areas across the country from about 6,000 housing units and approximately 22,000 retail establishments—department stores, supermarkets, hospitals, filling stations, and other types of stores and service establishments. All taxes directly associated with the purchase and use of items are included in the index.

The index measures price changes from a designated reference date; for most of the CPI-U the reference base is 1982-84 equals 100. An increase of 7 percent from the reference base, for example, is shown as 107.000. Alternatively, that relationship can also be expressed as the price of a base period market basket of goods and services rising from \$100 to \$107. For further details see the CPI home page on the internet at www.bls.gov/cpi and the CPI section of the BLS Handbook of Methods available on the internet at www.bls.gov/opub/hom/cpi/.

In calculating the index, price changes for the various items in each location are averaged together with weights that represent their importance in the spending of the appropriate population group. Local data are then combined to obtain a U.S. city average. Because the sample size of a local area is smaller, the local area index is subject to substantially more sampling and other measurement error than the national index. In addition, local indexes are not adjusted for seasonal influences. As a result, local area indexes show greater volatility than the national index, although their long-term trends are quite similar. **NOTE: Area indexes do not measure differences in the level of prices between cities; they only measure the average change in prices for each area since the base period.**

The **Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land, Texas, Core Based Statistical Area** includes the counties of Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, and Waller.

Information in this release will be made available to individuals with sensory impairments upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land, TX, December 2021 (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from -		
	Oct. 2021	Nov. 2021	Dec. 2021	Dec. 2020	Oct. 2021	Nov. 2021
All items	243.813	-	245.509	6.6	0.7	-
All items (1967 = 100)	781.997	-	787.435			
Food and beverages	251.965	-	253.796	4.9	0.7	-
Food	253.292	-	254.948	5.2	0.7	-
Food at home	242.828	244.432	242.059	6.3	-0.3	-1.0
Cereals and bakery products	288.071	-	268.674	-0.5	-6.7	-
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	278.343	-	279.564	12.7	0.4	-
Dairy and related products	199.750	-	202.257	5.2	1.3	-
Fruits and vegetables	290.869	-	292.947	5.5	0.7	-
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1)	285.206	-	295.534	8.8	3.6	-
Other food at home	211.775	-	209.984	3.4	-0.8	-
Food away from home	259.343	-	263.656	4.2	1.7	-
Alcoholic beverages	222.749	-	226.606	1.1	1.7	-
Housing	238.777	-	240.485	3.7	0.7	-
Shelter	276.207	277.666	278.716	1.9	0.9	0.4
Rent of primary residence	272.817	273.637	275.028	1.7	0.8	0.5
Owners' equivalent rent of residences(2)	259.282	260.417	261.456	1.9	0.8	0.4
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence(2)	259.282	260.417	261.456	1.9	0.8	0.4
Fuels and utilities	217.878	-	212.970	7.3	-2.3	-
Household energy	194.933	188.510	188.109	9.3	-3.5	-0.2
Energy services	191.827	185.256	184.856	8.9	-3.6	-0.2
Electricity	195.663	187.991	187.521	7.9	-4.2	-0.3
Utility (piped) gas service	154.240	154.262	154.283	16.4	0.0	0.0
Household furnishings and operations	154.321	-	157.893	12.3	2.3	-
Apparel	176.624	-	176.240	7.9	-0.2	-
Transportation	206.367	-	207.769	20.6	0.7	-
Private transportation	210.685	-	212.969	23.2	1.1	-
New and used motor vehicles(3)	104.187	-	106.096	19.7	1.8	-
New vehicles(1)	185.106	-	185.424	12.4	0.2	-
Used cars and trucks(1)	317.708	-	336.726	36.3	6.0	-
Motor fuel	256.792	266.482	256.081	58.9	-0.3	-3.9
Gasoline (all types)	256.926	266.417	255.971	58.9	-0.4	-3.9
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4)	259.888	269.760	259.009	61.1	-0.3	-4.0
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5)	279.229	288.302	277.514	50.2	-0.6	-3.7
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4)	280.826	289.175	279.176	43.3	-0.6	-3.5
Motor vehicle insurance(1)	659.651	-	665.617	1.5	0.9	-
Medical care	532.879	-	534.973	0.3	0.4	-
Recreation(3)	115.956	-	117.911	7.0	1.7	-
Education and communication(3)	124.233	-	124.344	3.6	0.1	-
Tuition, other school fees, and childcare(1) ...	1,295.012	-	1,295.012	2.9	0.0	-
Other goods and services	426.314	-	433.287	4.1	1.6	-
Commodity and service group						
Commodities	191.409	-	193.582	12.7	1.1	-
Commodities less food and beverages	161.627	-	163.819	17.3	1.4	-
Nondurables less food and beverages	207.103	-	207.518	18.3	0.2	-
Durables	115.834	-	118.596	16.5	2.4	-
Services	297.517	-	298.732	2.9	0.4	-
Special aggregate indexes						
All items less shelter	231.851	-	233.233	8.9	0.6	-
All items less medical care	229.907	-	231.565	7.1	0.7	-
Commodities less food	163.866	-	166.109	16.6	1.4	-

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land, TX, December 2021 (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) - Continued

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from -		
	Oct. 2021	Nov. 2021	Dec. 2021	Dec. 2020	Oct. 2021	Nov. 2021
Nondurables	229.631	-	230.737	10.7	0.5	-
Nondurables less food.....	207.598	-	208.244	16.8	0.3	-
Services less rent of shelter(2).....	318.123	-	317.660	3.7	-0.1	-
Services less medical care services.....	273.418	-	274.446	3.2	0.4	-
Energy	222.690	223.422	218.575	30.5	-1.8	-2.2
All items less energy	249.504	-	251.788	4.9	0.9	-
All items less food and energy	248.737	-	251.120	4.9	1.0	-

(1) Indexes on an April 1978=100 base.

(2) Indexes on a December 1982=100 base.

(3) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.

(4) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.

(5) Index on a December 1993=100.

- Data not available.